[For information on the Yahgan yékamuš or medicine-man, see category 116, pages 1297-1367.]

/1100 cont./

775 the ašóula through our region here [as though they were on a journey], as the yékamuš who can see both [groups] tell us!" Exceptions to this general rule are the kĕšpiš of the yékamuš and of persons who have drowned. Of the latter it is said: "While a person is drowning he threshes about excitedly. That is his kĕšpiš which is leaving him. After that the kĕšpiš stays in that place on water. Sometimes one hears his call: it sounds like the barking of a sea lion, but it is the call of the kĕšpiš of the drowned person." As for the yékamuš, "all persons surrounding a dying yékamuš must continually utter a wailing hu hu hu; at the same time they let their arms hang down and move their hands forward as though they were pushing sand or water. These movements quickly drive far away the Haučélla spirit (37) that is leaving the dying yékamuš.

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37. This spirit was characterized and described in detail on p. 746.

If this were not done, this bloodthirsty villain would remain at the place of death and harass all the people." Naturally, everyone present is painted with the white horizontal line from the nostrils to the ear-lobes. The kĕšpiš of certain persons, including those of the yékamuš, are strongly attracted by Haučélla. If they follow this woman, they actually go down into the earth with her and remain with her. Finally the Yamana also concede that sometimes a kĕšpiš appears near the hut and in the neighborhood of their own families. It whimpers and groans, although so softly that the people can scarcely hear it, but that is how they recognize it (38).

[304]

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38. Bove (d):297 and (e):159 assert: "In general the Fuegians are not very superstitious; if someone dies, they believe that the spirit leaves the body and roams about through the forests and beyond the mountains, restlessly suffering if he was evil in life, happily and quietly if he was good." His traveling companions Lovisato (b):149 and Spegazzini (a):172 repeat the same assertion. I did not encounter this

/1279 cont./

776 778 whim, went walking along the shore with some other girls from Puerto Mejillones and traveled far from the parental hut. Darkness overtook them at Puerto Piedra and they stayed there. Full of anxiety, the parents set out to look for the children, found them, and brought them back to camp early in the morning. No one scolded the children; not even their own parents reproached them. That same night the wife of old Thomas, who had been ill for a long time, died. Everyone explained the behavior of the children by saying: "The kĕ̆špix of that woman prompted the children to go so far away before nightfall. They are not to be blamed." That is why no one thought of /1280/ punishing the children. As has been described, the adults who take part in the singing in the čiéxaus hut (p.796) regard it as natural to consider heightened emotion and inner agitation as expressions of the kĕ̆špix, in short, as kĕ̆špix.

[156] This fact is important in understanding the influence of the yékamuš. Even the power by means of which a yékamuš operates, either on the spot or at a great distance, is called his kĕ̆špix.

Finally, the action of the wild forces of nature is sometimes pointed out as the expression of malevolent kĕ̆špix. This has given rise to expressions such as are used, for example, by Krickeberg:322: "The Fuegian animates the majestic natural surroundings of his homeland with demons." In this connection Fitz-Roy's (a):179 partially correct conjecture is also pertinent: "The fact of their believing that the evil spirit torments them in this world, if they do wrong, by storms, hail, snow, etc., is one reason why I am inclined to think that they have no thought of a future retribution" /cited in English/ (240).

240. This alone is enough to refute what Darwin (f):I, 123 reported: "With justifiable pride Jemmy Button stoutly maintained that in his country there is no devil." Roskoff:51 is more accurate in his judgment: "Ideas of the sun as a mighty creature endowed with will power, upon which man feels dependent, are

/1295 cont./

776 Yefáčel is to protect the person entrusted to him from sickness and physical harm. Beyond that, he also protects the person from all kinds of danger. In view of this, one may regard the Yefáčel as "guardian spirits" of human beings. If a child falls [153] ill, the parents believe the chief reason is that it has not yet been assigned a Yefáčel. Immediately a yékamuš is requested to do this. A person who has a Yefáčel enjoys good health throughout his life, and that is why "everyone must have his Yefáčel!" When a human being dies, his Yefáčel leaves him and thereafter wanders about alone as an orphan, independent of the others. The Yamana have nothing to say about the above and way of life of these Yefáčel. The yékamuš, however, add that the orphaned Yefáčel prefer the so-called "dangerous places." From there they continue to be on good terms with the yékamuš and are forever helpful to them.

The relationship of every human being to his Yefáčel, my informants unanimously agreed, is like that of [illegible]er and son or mother and daughter, in other words, extremely favorable and very intimate. The yékamuš has an even closer association with his Yefacel. Although the yékamuš assigns a Yefáčel to each person, he need not direct him thereafter. I was assured with great earnestness, however, that all Yefáčel must obey Wataųinęiwa and his decrees just as willingly and subserviently as must human beings, for "the Yefáčel are dependent upon him, just like all yámana [human beings]!" On this occasion someone ventured the statement: "Wataųinęiwa also has his Yefáčel." The other people present very definitely showed by their expressions that they did not agree with this assumption, nor was anyone able to explain who might have assigned such a Yefáčel to Wataųinęiwa. From certain previous statements it is easy to conclude why the complete name of these guardian spirits is Yefáčel xęola, "little spirit." Many Indians use the word Yapáčel instead.

776 Bridges mentioned these little guardian spirits several times
●756 and /1296/ always only in connection with the yékamuš. It is true that the Yefáčel means much more to a medicine man than to an ordinary human being, for the spirit performs special services for him in the activities of his calling. In Bridges (a):212 it is said: The Yefáčel "is a doctor's son and appears to doctors

/1296 cont./

776 in their dreams, tells them many things" /cited in English/ (259).
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259. And again at (k):238: "The yecamush claims to have dealings with beings called yapahchel, and they are the ones who give him the power to see and do fabulous things, especially to cure and to kill" /translated from Spanish/.

In BD:661 one reads: "Yapáčal, a being of more than human power and sagacity whom the yékamuš claimed as their inspiring power and instructor" /cited in English/. If, referring to this, Bridges believes that this designation also means "spirits of men, especially such as have been killed by violence" /cited in English/, I must reject this as inaccurate. A special relationship between a yékamuš and his Yefáčel is universally recognized, and it will be discussed below. Here it should merely be pointed out that there is a belief in thumb-sized guardian spirits, from whose large number every person is assigned his Yefáčel for the rest of his life.

b. Forms of Superstition

781 Several groups of definite spirits have just been named and described. These are not independent beings which actually exist, but are present only in Yamana belief. To this extent they must be regarded as objects of superstition. For various reasons they were treated separately, first of all, because each group is an individual, definite phenomenon. This is not true of the figures which appear in dreams and the many superstitious views which are linked with some definite circumstance.

1. Dreams

781 The fact that the Yamana dream a great deal must be traced
154 back to their alertness in everyday life and to their very vivid imaginations. Almost every morning one of the adults in a family

/1361 cont./

X575 course and soon disappears again. The leader follows him into the hut immediately, without any words or any kind of sign to the spectators. If this spirit or another one is supposed to appear again, the leader calls him out in the manner just described. A spirit never steps out of the Great Hut suddenly before the eyes of the women.

X575 /1362/ In exceptional cases a yékamuš will accompany some spirit along the dance course. Shortly before the end of the Kina celebration in 1922, Asikansis unexpectedly stepped into the Great Hut and announced that he had been requested in a dream to let Calderon portray the spirit of a particular fish. No one dared to contradict this old man who was already somewhat feeble mentally or to point out to him that the night was far advanced. So Calderon painted his whole body and the mask white, and over this he drew several vertical red lines two fingers wide. Asikansis, who is a yékamuš, wore his feather diadem; his face and the upper part of his body were painted white, with a red horizontal line extending from below the nose to either ear lobe. The two men stood facing each other. Calderon, as is customary, supported his mask, while Asikansis stretched his two arms out sidewise at shoulder height. Then Asikansis indicated the rhythm with low sustained cries of hŏhŏng. First they danced inside the hut as though they were practicing; then they performed their short, leaps sideways along the dance course. They stepped out five times and moved back and forth, each time after a pause of a few minutes. Asikansis always turned his back to the camp and unavoidably hid Calderon a little. After both had ended their dance, Asikansis sat down by the fire and softly sang on for a long time, completely absorbed. Calderon washed off his painting.

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X575 Just as the leader calls together the women and children at the beginning of the spirit appearances, so he also announces the end of the performance with a brief word. He says: "Now the last spirit has left this hut, not a single one is now sitting among the group of men. You, too, go back to your huts!" The men regularly announced the entrance of a spirit into the Kina hut with a warbling lalala..., which warned the women to be on their guard; now all is silent there, a sign that the spirits have all withdrawn.

/1380 cont./

X575 festival. The woman was very crafty, however; she soon noticed that this time the men were plotting against her. She did not hesitate to defend herself. In the dead of night she painted her whole body exactly the way she assumed that the men inside the Great Hut would be painted, and, unnoticed, she crept up on them. The men were sitting crowded around the fire, their heads bent very low in serious meditation. Very softly she slipped in on one side of the entrance, quickly crept along behind all the men and in passing drew a line on the back of each of them, and disappeared again on the other side of the exit. In the camp she told all the women that she had put an identical mark on the back of each man by means of which the women could see that only their husbands were sitting in the Kina hut, not spirits. Sure enough, when the men stepped out, each bore the line drawn on his back. Since then all the women have known the true state of affairs.

It must be admitted that probably all the women actually recognize their own husbands in their roles as individual spirits, but nevertheless their faith in these spirits is unshakable. A European observer can hardly explain how their knowledge and their faith can be reconciled. Since all the women and children are convinced that the men are in communication with the Kina spirits, they naturally acknowledge and obey all the instructions of the men as commands of the spirits. They are decisively guided in this judgment and attitude by the example of former generations, for the living generation regards every general view and custom handed down from the preceding one as immutable law. It is precisely for this reason that no woman would dare alter her conduct in any way during a Kina celebration (313).

313. The faith of the Selk'nam women in the Kloketen spirits is deeper and more certain (Vol. I, 901), but for them, too, the duty to conform to traditional rules of behavior is of decisive importance.

X575 ●756 In judging the basic ideas upon which this men's secret ceremony rests, it is important to keep in mind the active participation of the yékamuš. One of them, as a rule, takes over not only

/1380 cont./

X 575 • 756 the leadership of the entire Kina, but also, nearly always, the duty of calling each of the spirits out of the Great Hut with the customary arm movement. /1381/ In all the deliberations and decisions of the men the yékamuš have the decisive voice (314).

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314. It is exactly the same in the Kolketen. -- A detailed comparison of the men's festivals among the Selk'nam and the Yamana may be omitted here, since this has already been done by Gusinde (q):291, with the secret ceremony of the Halakwulup also included. At first glance it is striking that among the Selk'nam the actual youth initiation and the characteristic celebration of the men are united in a single affair (Vol. I, 1083).

They are regarded as closely associated with the spirits. It is only one of them, one who feels an urge to do so, who is permitted to perform the customary dance with one of the spirits outside the Great Hut. Again and again this or that yékamuš will approach a dancer or performer and give him renewed strength and firmness of limbs by means of his peculiar kind of magic massage. Among the Yamana there is no other sizeable group affair whose program, so to speak, is so entirely in the hands of the yékamuš as it is in the Kina.

X 575 With all the curious peculiarities of the Kina, it must not be overlooked that candidates are almost always introduced and are subject to strict treatment. The chief purpose is to familiarize them with the origin myth; actual training is only secondary. Only those chaps who have shown serious defects of character or whose behavior leads one to fear bad consequences are subject to strict discipline and personal influence. Out of consideration for the general welfare, the older members of the tribe may not miss any opportunity to protect the individual and the group as a whole from harm and injury. The Kina festival is not required to fulfill the task of educating all the uwála.

Finally, if one regards the Kina in connection with the entire social order, it clearly seems to be a foreign body. Even if one is not inclined to attribute historical value to the origin myth, nevertheless the suggestion that the Kina is supposed to

2: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SH6 Yahgan SH6

names meaning "The Powerful One," "The Highest One," and especially by the name of "My Father." He was not the maker or creator, but rather the master and ruler. He was the owner and giver of animals and plant food. It was he who gave life to human beings, and who took it away. He was fundamentally good and benevolent. He lived above in the heavens. He had no body nor had he wife or children. He was distinctly and eminently set off against and above all other spirits, good and bad, and in this sense stood as it were alone. He did not enter into the tribal folklore and mythology. He saw what human beings did, and upon those who broke the precepts of the *Yahgan* socio-moral code, which represented his will, he inflicted punishment in the way of early death, and often the death of their children.

The central role of Watauinéwa in the initiation rites has previously been mentioned. Apart, however, from these rites, Watauinéwa was prayed to a great deal by the individual *Yahgan*. These prayers were mostly petitions to him for food (as the owner of the food animals and plants), for cure and health, and for protection from the elements, as well as expressions of thankfulness. A good many of them were more or less traditionally crystallized formulae, of a few words each, but prayer was likewise expressed in free wording. A quite distinctive feature of *Yahgan* communication with the Supreme Being was the frequency of complaint expressions and charges directed toward him on the occasion of sickness, bad weather, or other evil fortune, and particularly on the occasion of deaths. Gusinde and Koppers collected over 60 of these various kinds of prayer formulae. Some of them are in somewhat archaic language.

In view of these archaisms in the complex, of the many distinctly native features (e. g., master, owner, not creator or maker), of the absence of all characteristically European or Christian conceptions, and of the express and emphatic statements by the natives whose memories or whose knowledge from their elders reached back to premissionary days, there can be no reasonable question but that *Yahgan* theism is aboriginal, and not the result of missionary influence. It seems equally clear that it was central in the religious outlook of the *Yahgan* and that it entered deeply and dynamically in their thoughts, emotional life, and personal behavior.

Shamanism.—A person became a medicine man (yékamush) through an inner call manifested to him in dreams and visions. The héshteka-yékamush, dwarfish spirits, appeared to him; a female spirit, a Haučéllakipa, also played an important part in shamanism, as the shaman's helper. Through the dreams and visions the future medicine man learned which of the small spirits was to be his yefáčel, or particular guardian spirit. From this spirit he also received a song.

2: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SH6 Yahgan SH6

756 He was trained in his professional duties by an older shaman. There was also held a shamans' institute and feast, which could last several months, to condition and school young candidates. During it, the candidates were secluded, and were required to fast, to sing much, to maintain a certain posture, to go with little sleep, and to drink water only through a hollow bird bone; and were taught healing techniques, tricks of the trade, and so forth. Women were barred from this shamans' school. Shamans were not banded into an organized society.

A full-fledged shaman, besides getting help from his special guard- [769] ian spirit, was also in close touch with the spirit of a deceased shaman. The shaman's relations were with the world of lesser spirits, not with the Supreme Being, Watauinéwa; and the latter did not figure in the shamans' school.

The shaman's chief function was that of curing the sick, but he also influenced weather, helped in hunting, prognosticated, and so forth. 755 The familiar procedures of massage, friction, and anointing, with the extraction of some object supposed to be the immediate cause of the disease, were used in curing. Such objects were often believed to have been sent by malevolent shamans from whose power the good shaman endeavored to deliver the victim. An evil shaman could steal and keep in his possession the soul of a victim, and the victim would die unless his soul were freed by another shaman. It was also the function of [769] the shaman to assign to each infant as soon after birth as possible its own yefáčel, a male one to the male infant and a female one to the female. It was the primary and most important duty of the yefáčel to protect its charge against sickness and bodily harm and against dangers of all kind.

575 **Kina rite.**—This *Yahgan* institution, with its numerous analogies to the yinchihaua of the *Alacaluf* (p. 76) and with the klóketen of the *Ona* (p. 120), could have been properly discussed under Social Culture because it had primarily a social function. But it is treated here because it also had important religious or pseudo-religious features and was largely under the direction of the shamans. In fact only a shaman could be the leader of the kina rite. Back of the kina rite was a long myth of an earlier time when the women held mastery of the tribe and lorded it over the men. To maintain their supremacy the women used masks to impersonate spirits and to hoodwink the men. Finally, one man discovered the deception, told the other men, and overthrew the women, killing all females except one very young child. In the kina rite only men who had passed twice through the čiéxaus rite could take part. Women were kept away from the large conical tent. The men secretly painted themselves and wore conical or conoidal masks (pl. 33, *d*) of bark or sealskin to impersonate a very great number

3: Lothrop E-5 (1924-1925) 1928
SH6 Yahgan SH6

776 and might be seized and done to death. However, the shaman usually had power over demons of this type and could give protection.

Apart from and above these lesser spirits was the great *Watasinewa*, described by Koppers (1925). This supreme being, though not concerned with creation, was the master of all. He sent the great flood in days long past, he causes death, he controls the game and fish supply, he is perfect and almighty. To him prayers were offered in sickness, grief, and thanksgiving, for this was not an aloof god normally forgetful of the affairs of mankind. Rather he was a supreme dispenser of justice, and he always punished the wicked.

The Shaman

756 Among the Yahgan both medicine-men and medicine-women existed and played an important part in the community. Supernatural powers were attained by certain individuals thought to have command over a natural spirit and the ghosts of departed witch-doctors. Thus dowered they could either kill or cure the individual and could affect the well-being of the community by controlling the weather or the food supply.

755 Disease, as among many primitive folk, they accredited to causes no less concrete than wounds. Hence the shaman must work his cure by removing some foreign object lodged in the body of the patient through accident or malice. Usually the doctor, after much massage, manipulation, and incantation, would triumphantly produce a stone or some other object, which he claimed to have extracted from the sufferer. The cures actually wrought can be attributed to the often beneficial results of the massage and to the healing power of suggestion.

756 According to Koppers (1925), the shaman assumed his function as the result of a "call" coming to either a man or a woman. This inner vocation took the form of a dream in which friendly relations were established with natural spirits and with the ghosts of dead shamans. After several such dreams a personal guardian spirit would be established. To the men a sort of shaman's school was open, but women were barred from this because they had not passed the men's final initiation. During the period of this school dreams were encouraged by rigorous training, much practice was given in the necessary sleight-of-hand tricks, and the proper chants were memorized. The curious spectacle of a man walking on hot

3: Lothrop E-5 (1924-1925) 1928
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coals witnessed by Rev. Thomas Bridges (1893, p. 238) may have been part of this training.

Graduation from the shaman school did not insure a successful professional career, for only by repeated proofs of power could the individual's reputation be established. It seems that there was much competition among the medicine-men, and several early observers note a tendency of almost all the older people to work cures, to prophesy, etc.

FIG. 94.—Yahgan shaman's bag. Diameter, 11 in. (14/2337)

In fig. 94 is illustrated the guanaco-hide bag in which the shaman carried his impedimenta. The contents were diadems of heron-plumes and of kelp-goose down, and white paint. To these doubtless should be added a number of small hard objects to be shown to the sick as the cause of their pain.

DEATH

When death took place the corpse was wrapped in old seal-skins and buried outside of the house within twenty-four hours. If the ground were frozen, the corpse might be covered with stones and shrubs to keep off dogs and foxes, or it might be buried in a cave or on a small island. Hyades (1891, p. 379) says that when death occurred far from home the body was carried into the woods and cremated. This was done that the bones might not fall into the hands of enemies and be made into harpoon-points.

For mourning the family of the defunct covered themselves with